

# *Model Tobacco Policy for Healthcare Facilities in South Carolina*

## **Purpose**

As providers of healthcare services, preventing the use of and exposure to tobacco products is consistent with our mission to improve and protect human health. The use of tobacco products has been irrefutably linked to a number of serious health problems, including death. Hence, tobacco use will be actively discouraged in all areas of this facility. Beginning \_\_\_\_\_ [specify beginning date of policy], any use of tobacco is strictly prohibited in any indoor area of this facility, in any company owned or leased vehicle, and on the managed or maintained grounds of this facility.

## **Goal**

The goal of this policy is to provide a safe and healthy environment for patients, employees, attending physicians, volunteers, medical students, and visitors. This goal will be achieved through efforts that are designed to:

- Eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke;
- Promote and provide smoking cessation programs;
- Minimize fire hazards;
- Protect and maintain the physical property of the facility;
- Reduce health costs, social costs, and liability risks associated with tobacco use; and
- Provide leadership in preventing tobacco-related diseases.

## **Procedures**

This facility will adhere to the following procedures:

- Prohibit the sale of all tobacco products within the facility or on the grounds;
- Prohibit the use of tobacco products by patients, employees, attending physicians, volunteers, medical students, and visitors while on the grounds, in any buildings and in any company vehicle;
- Post prominent “No Smoking” signs throughout the facility and grounds;
- Hold employees responsible for any damages to facility properties that are caused by the use of tobacco.

## **Education and Training**

This healthcare facility will provide information and assistance to its employees regarding tobacco, to include:

- Offering tobacco cessation programs or making referral to appropriate offsite services;
- Providing educational materials and programs on tobacco;
- Providing reimbursement and other incentives for participation in smoking cessation programs; and
- Providing coverage of smoking cessation programs through the employee health insurance plan.
- Incorporating a standard practice of screening all patients for tobacco use and advising them to quit following the *Clinical Practice Guidelines for Treating Tobacco Use and*

*Dependence* ( U.S. Public Health Service, 2000).

### **Enforcement**

It will be the responsibility of every employee, staff, and student to politely bring this smoking policy to the attention of persons who are observed violating the regulations.

Employees, staff, and students refusing to abide by these policies should be reported to their department head or immediate supervisor for appropriate action. Anyone violating this policy shall be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the healthcare facility.

Visitors in violation of this policy should be politely informed of this fact. Visitors persisting in violating this policy may be reported to a Safety Officer.

### **Communication of this Policy**

We are a tobacco-free Healthcare facility. Because of our commitment to the prevention of illness and restoration of health and to protect the health and safety of our patients and employees, *the use of tobacco products is not permitted on managed or maintained property.*

We strive to make all visitors, employees, patients and students aware of our commitment to the health and well being of all. Thus, our implementation of a tobacco free policy will include the following guidelines:

- Tobacco-free facility signs will be posted in prominent location at all entrances, grounds, parking lots, and in patient rooms, as well as in company owned or leased vehicles.
- Information about the tobacco policy will be included in employee and student manuals.
- The Human Resources Division shall include discussion of the tobacco policy at the time of employment and in the formal orientation of all-incoming employees and medical students.
- The smoking policy will be fully explained by the Admissions Department to all patients and accompanying family upon admission to the healthcare facility.